



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

New Mexico State Office  
1474 Rodeo Road  
P. O. Box 27115  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-0115  
www.nm.blm.gov

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IN REPLY REFER TO: NM 101695

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

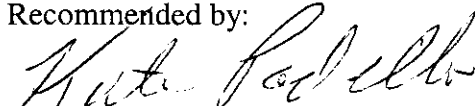
I have reviewed the Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment for the proposed Camino Real International Heritage Center. The proposed action includes the classification of 120 acres of federal public lands as suitable for transfer to the State of New Mexico under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act and the joint construction, by the State and BLM, of a museum and associated facilities to commemorate El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail. Also included in the analyses for the proposed Center are alternatives which include changes in management stipulations for certain surrounding public lands. The document, therefore, consists of an Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment (RMPA/EA).

The Socorro Resource Management Plan (RMP) was completed in 1989 and did not foresee the construction of a facility such as the proposed Center, which includes the surrounding, natural terrain as part of "exhibits" for interpretation. Therefore, an amendment to the Socorro RMP is required if an alternative is adopted which includes changes in the management of surrounding public lands.

The analyses conducted during this environmental assessment have indicated that no significant impacts would occur upon the human environment as a result of any of the proposed alternatives. Those impacts which have been identified could either be mitigated through normal practices of construction, management, etc., or have positive potential, by adding a new point of interest for tourists, historians, and the general public in a region of New Mexico which currently sustains very low income. While no alternative poses significant negative impacts, some clearly offer greater potential positive effects.

The element of protecting the investment of the federal and state taxpayers in the Center was also considered in these analyses. In this context, Alternative 2 was selected as the preferred alternative. It was found to offer no significant impacts, while providing the best protection for the surrounding landscape and, at the same time, retaining many aspects of multiple use of our nation's public lands.

Recommended by:

  
Kate Padilla  
Socorro Field Office Manager

Approved by:

  
Michelle J. Chavez  
New Mexico State Director